

**Archaeology of the American South
Anthropology 550
Spring 2024**

Weeks 11-12: Moundville and Mississippian Iconography

Moundville is among the largest civic-ceremonial centers built in Mississippian times, second only to Cahokia. This week's readings focus attention on studies of Moundville's social organization, and how it articulates with the architecture, community patterns, and art. The Southeastern Ceremonial Complex (SECC) has long been a key concept in discussions of Mississippian art and religion. A second section of readings provides an introduction to the contemporary approaches to Mississippian iconography..

General Readings (Moundville):

Peebles, Christopher S., and Susan M. Kus (1977). Some Archaeological Correlates of Ranked Societies. *American Antiquity* 42: 421-448.

Knight, Vernon J. (1998). Moundville as a Diagrammatic Ceremonial Center. In *Archaeology of the Moundville Chiefdom*, edited by Vernon J. Knight, Jr. and Vincas P. Steponaitis, pp. 44-62. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.

Steponaitis, Vincas P. (1998). Population Trends at Moundville. In *Archaeology of the Moundville Chiefdom*, edited by Vernon J. Knight and Vincas P. Steponaitis, pp. 26-43. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.

Wilson, Gregory D. (2010). Community, Identity, and Social Memory at Moundville. *American Antiquity* 75(1): 3-18.

Scarry, C. Margaret, and Vincas P. Steponaitis (2016). Moundville as a Ceremonial Ground. In *Rethinking Moundville and Its Hinterland*, edited by Vincas P. Steponaitis and C. Margaret Scarry, pp. 255-268. University of Florida Press.

General Readings (Iconography):

Waring, Antonio J., Jr., and Preston Holder (1945). A Prehistoric Ceremonial Complex in the Southeastern United States. *American Anthropologist* 47(1): 1-34. [Read pp. 1-3 and skim the rest.]

Knight, Vernon J. (2006). Farewell to the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex. *Southeastern Archaeology* 25(1): 1-5.

Lankford, George E. (2007). Some Cosmological Motifs in the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex, in Kent Reilly and James Garber, eds., *Ancient Objects and Sacred Realms: Interpretations of Mississippian Iconography*, pp. 8-38. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Lankford, George E. (2007). "The Path of Souls": Some Death Imagery in the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex. In Kent Reilly and James Garber, eds., *Ancient Objects and Sacred Realms: Interpretations of Mississippian Iconography*, pp. 174-212. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Optional Readings:

Steponaitis, Vincas P., and Vernon J. Knight, Jr. (2004). Moundville Art in Historical and Social Context. In *Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand: American Indian Art of the Ancient Midwest and South*, edited by Richard F. Townsend and Robert V. Sharp, pp. 166-181. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Welch, Paul D., and C. Margaret Scarry (1995). Status-Related Variation in Foodways in the Moundville Chiefdom. *American Antiquity* 60(3): 397-419.

Scarry, C. Margaret, and Vincas P. Steponaitis (1997). Between Farmstead and Center: The Natural and Social Landscape of Moundville. In *People, Plants, and Landscapes: Studies in Paleoethnobotany*, edited by Kristen J. Gremillion, pp. 107-122. University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa.

Steponaitis, Vincas P. (1978). Location Theory and Complex Chiefdoms: A Mississippian Example. In *Mississippian Settlement Patterns*, edited by Bruce D. Smith, pp. 417-453. Academic Press, New York.

Knight, Vernon J., and Vincas P. Steponaitis (1998). A New History of Moundville. In *Archaeology of the Moundville Chiefdom*, edited by Vernon J. Knight and Vincas P. Steponaitis. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.

Steponaitis, Vincas P. (2016). Moundville Palettes: Prestige Goods or Inalienable Possessions? In *Rethinking Moundville and Its Hinterland*, edited by Vincas P. Steponaitis and C. Margaret Scarry, pp. 121-133. University of Florida Press.

Lankford, George E. (2004). World on a String. In *Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand: American Indian Art of the Ancient Midwest and South*, edited by Richard F. Townsend and Robert V. Sharp, pp. 206-217. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Knight, Vernon J. (1986). The Institutional Organization of Mississippian Religion. *American Antiquity* 51: 675-687.

Knight, Vernon J., James A. Brown, and George E. Lankford (2001). On the Subject Matter of Southeastern Ceremonial Complex Art. *Southeastern Archaeology* 20(2): 129-141.

Reilly, F. Kent, III (2004). People of Earth, People of Sky: Visualizing the Sacred in Native American Art of the Mississippian Period. In *Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand: American Indian Art of the Ancient Midwest and South*, edited by Richard F. Townsend and Robert V. Sharp, pp. 125-137. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Brown, James A. (2004). The Cahokian Expression: Creating Court and Cult. In *Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand: American Indian Art of the Ancient Midwest and South*, edited by Richard F. Townsend and Robert V. Sharp, pp. 104-123. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Steponaitis, Vincas P., Samuel E. Swanson, George Wheeler, and Penelope B. Drooker (2011). The Provenance and Use of Etowah Palettes. *American Antiquity* 76(1): 81-106. [Focus on how palettes were used and the implications of these findings, not on the details of the chemical analyses.]